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[54] **EMBEDDABLE MOUNTING DEVICE AND METHOD**

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EMBEDDABLE MOUNTING DEVICE AND METHOD

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to devices and methods utilized to permanently install fixtures, such as a steel wall plates, a shelves, beds, cabinets, etc., to a wall in a security facility, such as a jail, prison, juvenile detention center, or psychiatric hospital, and more particularly to an embedable wall construction unit installable within a wall in a manner to have at least one surface exposed to the surface of the wall that is suitable for forming a permanent attachment with fixtures, such as steel wall plates, beds, shelves, cabinets, etc., to anchor the fixture permanently in place, and a method of utilizing the embedable wall construction unit for permanently securing fixtures to a concrete block wall.

BACKGROUND ART

It is a common practice within the detention industry and other public facilities, such as jails, prisons, juvenile detention centers, and psychiatric hospitals, to permanently affix certain furnishing such as the beds, cabinets, shelves, lavatories, sinks etc. and fixtures such as steel wall plates to the walls of the facility. A steel wall plate is a sheet of steel that is utilized to form or cover an existing wall to provided addition security within a detainment facility. Permanently affixing these fixtures to the walls prevents destruction of the fixtures themselves and reduces the likelihood of an inmate utilizing the fixtures as a weapon to injure a guard or cell mate. The conventional method of permanently installing these fixtures has been to form a cavity within a fully constructed wall unit, install a reinforcing bar or bars into the cavity, and then grouting the reinforcing bar(s) within the cavity using a cementing agent such as cement. A steel plate is then welded or otherwise affixed to the reinforcing bars in a manner to cover the grouted cavity opening. The steel plate acts as a mounting base to which a fixture mounting bracket, such as a length of angle iron, is welded or otherwise permanently affixed.

This method of permanently affixing fixtures to concrete block walls, masonry walls and pre-cast walls is labor intensive and leads to a degraded wall structure. In addition, the gap between the concrete block wall and the steel plate may be used to hide razor blades, knives, drugs, and other contraband articles. It would be a benefit, therefore, to have a embeddable mounting device that could be used in connection with a wall that did not provide a gap between the wall and a steel mounting surface and that forms an integral part of the wall construction. It would also be desirable to have a method for mounting a fixture permanently to a concrete block wall that did not require degrading the wall structure by forming a cavity within the preexisting wall during installation of the fixture.

GENERAL SUMMARY DISCUSSION OF INVENTION

It is an object of the invention to provide a embeddable mounting device that is used in connection with a concrete block wall, a masonry wall or a pre-cast wall and that does not provide a gap between the wall and a steel mounting surface when in use.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a method of permanently mounting a fixture permanently to a wall that does not require degrading the wall structure by forming a cavity within a portion of the wall during installation of the fixture.

Accordingly, in a first aspect of the invention, a embeddable mounting device is provided. The embeddable mounting device comprises a first rectangular metal plate member having a first inner surface, a first outer surface, a first length measuring between fifteen (15") and seventeen (17") inches, a first width measuring between seven (7") and nine (9") inches, and a first thickness; a second rectangular metal plate member having a second inner surface, a second outer surface, a second length of a measurement equal to the first length, a second width of a measurement equal to the first width, and a second thickness; and a pair of vertical spacer members secured between the first inner surface and the second inner surface in a manner create at least one reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavity between the first and second metal plate members, in a manner to hold the first and second metal plate members in parallel relationship with each other such that when said first and second metal plate members simultaneously contact a planar surface the first and second metal plate members are both perpendicularly oriented to the planar surface, and in a manner such that the first and second outer surfaces are spaced apart a spacing distance measuring between seven (7") and eight (8") inches.

The first length is preferably between about eight and one-half (8½") and eight and three-quarters (8¾") inches and the first width is preferably between about sixteen and one-half (16½") and seventeen (17") inches to allow the first and second metal plate members to completely fill the space occupied by a conventional concrete block plus the area filled by the cement/grout mixture that is placed between adjacent blocks and is used to cement a plurality of the concrete blocks together to form a wall. Use of the preferably sized first and second metal plate members allows the plate members to directly contact and abut the adjacent concrete blocks located above, below, and to the sides of the mounting device in the concrete block wall within which the mounting unit is installed or embedded. Direct contact with the adjacent concrete blocks eliminates the loosening effect that can occur by the shrinking or squeezing out of the cement or grout from between the adjacent blocks and the mounting device when the mounting device is installed with a layer of cement or grout surrounding the edges of the metal plate members of the mounting device. In addition, because the concrete block is harder than the cement/grout it is more difficult to dig out around the perimeter of the exposed metal plate members to create hiding places for contraband items.

A preferred embodiment of the mounting device includes a third vertical spacer member to create a pair of reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavities that are alignable with the reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavities of conventional concrete blocks and into which vertical reinforcing bars and a cementing slurry are introduced during installation of the mounting device. The term "cementing slurry" is used herein to mean any of the cementing agents conventionally poured into the reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavities of conventional concrete blocks that are utilized to add strength to the construction. In another preferred embodiment a plurality of vertical reinforcing bars are secured to the mounting device in a manner such that, when the mounting device is placed atop a first concrete block and below a second concrete block, a length of each vertical reinforcing bar extends into at least one of the reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavities of each of the first and second cement blocks. Each of the vertical reinforcing bars is preferably connected to the mounting device by welding, however, any method of attachment that holds the vertical reinforcing bar in a fixed relationship to the mounting device may be used.

3

In another aspect of the invention a method of permanently mounting furniture fixtures to a concrete block wall is provided. The method includes the step of installing a mounting device, of the type described above, into the block wall in place of one of the concrete blocks during construction of the wall. The mounting device is placed into the wall in a manner such that the reinforcing bar receiving cavity of the device is aligned with at least one reinforcing bar receiving cavity of a concrete block. A vertical reinforcing bar is then inserted into the aligned reinforcing bar receiving cavities. A cementing slurry mixture is then poured into the aligned reinforcing bar receiving cavities in a manner such that the vertical reinforcing bar and a quantity of the cementing slurry mixture fills the space between the first and second plate members of the mounting device. The cementing slurry mixture is then allowed to harden. After the cementing slurry mixture has hardened sufficiently to at least hold the mounting device in place, a furnishing fixture may be permanently affixed to the wall by welding one side of a section of angle iron to the outer surface of one of the plate members and the other side of the angle iron section to the fixture. Although it is possible to utilize a mounting bracket, such as a length of angle iron or other bracket configuration, between the outer surface and the fixture, it is preferred to attach the fixture directly to the outer surface of the metal plate member through welding, or with fasteners such as bolts, security bolts, rivets, conventional interlocking connectors, etc.

When threaded connectors such as security or conventional bolts are used, one of the first and second plates preferably has at least two apertures formed therethrough that are each in connection with an internally threaded, threaded connector engaging cavity. The apertures themselves can be threaded for engagement with a threaded connector or a weld nut can be aligned with each aperture and welded to the first or second plate in a manner such that a threaded connector can engage each of the weld nuts. When this embodiment is used, it is important to provide a covering for the weld nuts prior to pouring the quantity of the cementing slurry mixture into the space between the first and second plate members of the mounting device. The covering is preferably a material that will reserve sufficient space adjacent the weld nut within the space between the first and second plates to allow the threaded connector to be fully tightened. A section of foam type plastic material placed over the nut is preferred, however, a plastic cap adapted to the seal the nut from the cement slurry is also sufficient to practice the invention.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

For a further understanding of the nature and objects of the present invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like elements are given the same or analogous reference numbers and wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary embodiment of the embeddable mounting device of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a side view showing one of the space members and two of the vertical reinforcing bars.

FIG. 3 is a bottom view showing the four vertical reinforcing bars, the three vertical spacer members, the two internal concrete cavities and the two side positioned concrete cavities.

FIG. 4 is a side view of the mounting device of FIG. 1 showing two of the vertical reinforcing bars extending above and below the second metal plate member.

4

FIG. 5 is a perspective detail view of a partially constructed concrete block wall with the mounting device of FIG. 1 in place between two conventional concrete blocks.

FIG. 6 is a detail perspective view of the completely constructed concrete block wall of FIG. 5 with the mounting device of FIG. 1 installed therein.

FIG. 7 is a schematic view of a concrete block wall having two mounting devices installed.

FIG. 8 is a detail perspective view of the concrete block wall of FIG. 6 with a mounting bracket welded thereto.

FIG. 9 is a schematic view of the concrete block wall of FIG. 7 with a bunk bed permanently affixed thereto.

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a second exemplary embodiment of the embeddable mounting device of the present invention including a pair of threaded-connector receiving apertures formed through a plate member, each threaded-connector receiving aperture having a weld nut aligned therewith and welded into place to the interior wall of the plate member.

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EXEMPLARY MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary embodiment of the embeddable mounting device of the present invention generally designated by the numeral **10**. Mounting device **10** includes a first rectangular metal plate member **12**; a second rectangular metal plate member **14**; first, second and third vertical spacer members **16,18,20**; and four vertical reinforcing bars **22,24,26,28**. In this embodiment first and second metal plate members **12,14** are both one-quarter (¼") inch thick mild steel plates having a height "A" of eight and five-eighths (8⅝") inches and a width "B" of sixteen and three-quarters (16¾") inches. With reference to FIG. 2, first and second plate members **12,14** are secured together and spaced a distance "C", between an outwardly facing first outer surface **30** (more clearly shown in FIG. 1) and outwardly facing second outer surface **32** (more clearly shown in FIG. 4), a distance of seven and five-eighths (7⅝") inches, by the three vertical spacer members **16,18,20** (FIG. 3). Each vertical spacer member **16,18,20** is constructed from one-quarter (¼") inch thick mild steel plate having a height of eight and five-eighths (8⅝") inches and a width of about nine and one-eight inches. The shorter height side edges have about a one-quarter inch radius bend located about one inch from, and running parallel to, the shorter eight and five-eighths inch sides. The bends are formed in a manner to form a vertical spacer member **16,18,20** having a U-shaped cross section and including, respectively, a central section **16*a*,18*a*,20*a***, and a pair of leg sections **16*b*,16*c*; 18*b*,18*c*; 20*b*,20*c***. The edges of leg sections **16*b*,16*c*** are aligned with the edges of first and second plate members **12,14** and welded into place in a manner to form a first end cavity **34**. The edges of leg sections **20*b*,20*c*** are aligned with the edges of first and second plate members **12,14** and welded into place in a manner to form an oppositely directed second end cavity **36**. When vertical spacer member **18** is installed, first and second reinforcing bar and cement cavities **37,39** are also formed on either side of vertical spacer member **18**.

With reference once again to FIG. 1, the four vertical reinforcing bars **22,24,26,28** are each constructed from about a fifteen and five-eighths (14⅝") inch of one-half (½") inch diameter steel reinforcing bar stock. With reference to FIG. 2, each bar **22,24,26,28** has four forty-five (45°) degree one-half (½") inch radius bends formed in a manner to create a central section **23*a*** that is offset from the two end sections **23*b*,23*c***. With reference to FIG. 4, each end section **23*b*,23*c***

5

extends away from mounting device **10** about three (3") inches and, in use, extends into the reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavity of a conventional concrete block

FIG. **5** is a detail perspective view of a partially constructed concrete block wall, generally designated by the numeral **38**. Block wall **38** is constructed from a plurality of conventional concrete blocks **40**. Each concrete block **40** includes a pair of reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavities **42**. A mounting device **10** is shown installed between two concrete blocks **40***a*,**40***b* and above two concrete blocks **40***c*,**40***d*.

FIG. **6** is a detail perspective view of a completed wall **38** showing mounting device **10** positioned between two concrete blocks **40***a*,**40***b*; above two concrete blocks **40***c*,**40***d*; and below two concrete blocks **40***e*,**40***f*. As shown in the figure, the perimeter edges of plate member **12** directly contact the edges of the surrounding concrete blocks **40***a*–**40***f*. FIG. **7** is a schematic view showing a pair of mounting devices **10** installed within representative wall **38**.

An exemplary method of installing a embeddable to a wall **38** is now described with general reference to FIGS. **1**–**4** and particular reference to FIGS. **5**–**9**. With reference to FIG. **5**, in the exemplary method of permanently attaching a fixture to a block wall, the method includes the step of installing at least one mounting device **10**, as described above, into a block wall **38** in place of one of the concrete blocks **40** during construction. Installation of mounting device **10** is as follows: mounting device **10** is placed into wall **38** in a manner such that the reinforcing bar receiving cavities **37**,**38** of mounting device **10** are aligned with one reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavity **42** (not shown) each from concrete blocks **40***c*,**40***d*,**40***e*,**40***f*. With vertical reinforcing bar end sections **23***b*,**23***c* in place, a cementing slurry mixture is then poured into the aligned reinforcing bar receiving cavities **37**,**39**, and **42** in a manner such that vertical reinforcing bars **22**,**24**,**26**,**28** and a quantity of the cementing slurry mixture fill the aligned reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavities **37**,**39**, of mounting device **10** and the aligned reinforcing bar and cement receiving cavities of concrete blocks **40***c*,**40***d*,**40***e*,**40***f*. The cementing slurry mixture is then allowed to harden while the wall **38** is fully constructed as shown in FIG. **7**.

Once wall **38** is fully constructed, a furnishing fixture, such as a bunk bed assembly **44** (FIG. **9**) may be permanently affixed to wall **38** using two brackets **46**,**48**. With reference to FIG. **8**, in this exemplary method brackets **46**,**48** are lengths of angle iron having a first side **50** and a perpendicularly oriented second side **52**. Fixture **44** is mounted to plate member **12** by placing fixture **44** against wall **38** in a manner such that a section of fixture **44** is adjacent one of the mounting devices **10**. Each first side **50** of each bracket **46**,**48** is welded to a plate member **12** and each second side **52** is welded to fixture **44**. Fixture **44** is now permanently attached. It can be seen that by advantageously positioning, at various heights and various spacings, one or more mounting devices **10** into a wall **38** during construction the method may be utilized to permanently install a variety of fixtures **44** to a block wall **38**.

FIG. **10** shows a second exemplary embodiment of the embeddable mounting device of the present invention, generally designated by the designation **10***a*. In this